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**Subject:** Feasibility Study to Explore a Joint Operations Centre with the Town of Pelham Public Works Department

**Report to:** Public Works Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, September 12, 2023

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## Recommendations

1. That staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to retain the services of a consultant through a competitive process to perform the following in support of exploring the potential for a joint public works operations centre with the Town of Pelham:
  - a) Conduct a feasibility study to investigate options to establish a new joint Operations Centre with the Town of Pelham Public Works Department at the current Niagara Region Pelham Patrol Yard property located at 1495 Victoria Ave, Fenwick, the costs of which will be shared with the Town of Pelham; and
  - b) Concurrently conduct a service delivery review of the Region's Pelham Patrol Yard to determine the future capacity needs of the Region.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to retain a consultant to undertake a feasibility study to investigate the opportunity, viability, and cost efficiency of establishing a joint Operations Centre with the Town of Pelham Public Works Department at the current Niagara Region Pelham Patrol Yard property located at 1495 Victoria Ave, Fenwick (Regional Yard).
- Additionally, the consultant would conduct a service delivery review of the Regional Yard to develop a plan ensuring the business unit is equipped with sufficient resources and facilities to meet the municipality's current and future service level expectations in an efficient and effective manner.
- As a result of a Public Works Operational Review conducted by The Town of Pelham in January 2020, it was determined that the current Public Works Yard located at 675 Tice Road, Fenwick (Town Yard) is not sufficient to service the Town's current and future service levels.

- During initial consultation with Town of Pelham staff, there is a perceived benefit and value in exploring a collaborative solution to meet the growing needs of both municipalities while maximizing resource allocation, efficiencies and opportunities for shared resources and services.
- If authorized by Regional Council to undertake the aforementioned study, prior to proceeding with the procurement of services, Town of Pelham staff will seek authorization from Pelham Town Council to support this initiative (including cost sharing).

## **Financial Considerations**

Anticipated expenditures to undertake a feasibility study will be equally allocated between Niagara Region and The Town of Pelham, which will be captured in a cost-sharing agreement between the parties. Niagara Region will fund the entirety of the costs associated with the completion of the Service Delivery Review portion of the study. Niagara Region's costs are anticipated to be \$100,000 and will be funded through the approved Transportation Services Division Annual Patrol Yard Improvement capital project (20000915).

## **Analysis**

Niagara Region became the owner of the Regional Yard, at 1495 Victoria Ave, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0, in February of 1975 (see Appendix 1). The property is 7.77 acres in size. The property includes the following structures:

- 1,374 SF service garage (1990)
- 2,607SF operations office (1990)
- 585 SF equipment garage (1990)
- 408 SF material storage garage (1990)
- 2 – 7,854 SF salt-sand storage domes (1971/2001). The storage domes underwent rehabilitation in 2020 and the total cost for this work was \$238,683.

Presently, a maximum of 24 Region road operations staff members report to this facility during spring, summer and fall road maintenance operations, and a maximum of 22 staff members during winter maintenance operations for Patrol Areas 13 and 14 (see Appendix 2).

The opportunity to explore alternative operational facilities to address the current and future needs of the Transportation Operations business unit was historically identified through the completion of a 2004 Patrol Yard Network Development Strategy Report. The report concluded the Smithville and Pelham Patrol Yards were deficient in terms of being able to support daily operations due to issues with aging buildings, the advancement in technology, fleet expansion and growing service demand.

Building on the findings of the 2004 study, a Niagara Patrol Yards Study (document available upon request) was undertaken in 2013 to explore available options to address the demands of both locations. The study recommended the construction of a new facility in the vicinity of the current Smithville Patrol Yard that would accommodate both the Smithville and Pelham Patrol Yards. However, the geographical distance of the proposed location for the new facility placed staff and resources for the Pelham Patrol Yard at an unreasonable distance from the service area for which staff working out of the Pelham Patrol Yard are responsible. Upon further review of the study, it was determined that there were more challenges created by the consolidation of two operations yards than benefits. Consequently, the recommendation of this report was not initiated.

At the time, the study did not consider the exploration of co-locating with a local municipality to meet the needs of both Niagara Region and a local municipality. Although the requirement to address the long-term needs of the Smithville Patrol Yard is currently paused, the opportunity presented through the recommendations of this report can be considered as a potential model to explore for the Smithville Patrol Yard based on the feasibility of its results.

The Town Yard is located at 675 Tice Road, Fenwick, ON, approximately 4.4 km from Regional Yard (see Appendix 3). As part of The Town of Pelham's Public Works Operational Review (document available upon request), three (3) options were proposed to the address its space requirement needs:

- Option 1: Expand current site at Tice Road
- Option 2: Purchase land and develop a new facility
- Option 3: Explore leasing a portion of Niagara Region's Pelham Patrol Yard

The exploration of a joint Operations Centre has not been considered or analyzed to date and the completion of a feasibility study will assist Niagara Region and The Town of Pelham with the necessary information to determine whether the permanent

establishment of a co-located facility is feasible on the current Regional Yard grounds to meet the current and future demands of both municipalities.

Undertaking a feasibility study will provide the critical information and analysis on the proposal to explore a joint Operations Centre. This information will assist Council and staff with making an informed decision in the pursuit of this opportunity. The study will establish the practicality of this proposal by examining and reporting the potential benefits, disadvantages, opportunities, barriers, and threats from an economical, social, technological, legal, and environmental perspective.

Additionally, the study will review the potential for cost savings to both municipalities through cost sharing for maintenance, utilities, material, and equipment acquisition and outline the capital funds required to construct a new joint facility.

A joint Operations Centre provides the potential opportunity to streamline processes and service delivery methods and enables improved communication between each municipality. Furthermore, the establishment of a joint facility could promote collaboration, the exchange of ideas, processes, best practices and expertise in the maintenance and operation of the municipalities' road networks. It also presents an opportunity to reduce the environmental footprint of each municipalities' Yards through the consolidation of resources and reduction of individual property acquisition.

Subject to Council approval of this report, and subsequent approval by the Town, Regional Staff would take the lead in undertaking a competitive process to retain a consultant and will enter into a cost-sharing agreement with the Town as required.

Subject to Council approval staff are committed to collaborate and work together throughout the entirety of this initiative to ensure the interests of both municipalities and the residents of Niagara Region and The Town of Pelham are represented and fully considered.

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

1. An alternative to the Staff recommendation in this report is the continuation of the status quo, namely the capital and operating investment to maintain the existing buildings, structures and grounds of the Pelham Patrol Yard to meet the current service levels of Niagara Region's Transportation Operations business unit (and separately, The Town of Pelham's continued pursuit and investigation into

determining an appropriate approach to ensure its Public Works facility is equipped to support its current and future needs).

Included in the consideration of this alternative is the additional capital investment required at the Pelham Patrol Yard to sustain its expected service life, improve building function, and address ancillary operational requirements. Table 1 below outlines the short-term projects presently identified.

Staff do not recommend executing any of the works below until the subject study is completed. Should the co-location model not be adopted, the work program below will require execution.

Table 1 – Capital Investment Requirements for Pelham Patrol Yard

<b>Capital Investment</b>	<b>Estimated Expenditure</b>
Back-up Generator Installation	\$500,000
Asphalt Replacement	\$1,740,000
Window Treatment – Office Area	\$60,000
Surveillance System	\$185,000
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>\$2,485,000</b>

\* Includes non-recoverable HST

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2. A second alternative would be for Niagara Region to analyze and assess the feasibility and practicality of leasing building and grounds space to The Town of Pelham without alteration to the property or structures as proposed in The Town of Pelham's Public Works Operational Review. This alternative is not recommended as the current state and footprint of the service garage and office areas is insufficient to accommodate both business units.
3. A third alternative would be to return to the recommendations of the 2013 Niagara Patrol Yards Study (document available upon request). Due to the geographic challenges associated with this option, staff are not recommending this alternative.

## **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The recommendation in this report aligns with the following Council Strategic Priorities:

### **Effective Region**

- Implement continuous improvement and modernized processes to ensure value-for money with Regional services and programs
- Explore and implement opportunities to improve service delivery through shared services
- Deliver fiscally responsible and sustainable services
- Implement continuous improvement and modernized processes to ensure value-for-money with Regional services and programs

### **Green and Resilient Region**

- Deliver operations and services that align with our greenhouse gas emission target and climate change goals
- Partner with the local municipalities and community organizations to advance climate change action in Niagara

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#### **Recommended by:**

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Commissioner of Public Works (Acting)  
Public Works Department

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#### **Submitted by:**

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Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Brian McMahon, Program Financial Specialist, and reviewed by Frank Tassone, Director Transportation Services, Matt Robinson, Director, Strategic Transformation Office, Donna Gibbs, Director Legal and Court Services.

## **Appendices**

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|------------|--------------------------------------|
| Appendix 1 | Niagara Region Pelham Patrol Yard    |
| Appendix 2 | Niagara Region Patrol Areas          |
| Appendix 3 | The Town of Pelham Public Works Yard |





Map Legend

- Assessment Parcels
- Municipal Boundaries



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Transportation Integrated Services Division.  
This map was compiled from various data  
sources and is current as of August 2023.

Projection: UTM Zone 17N CSRS, NAD83  
0 20 40  
Meters



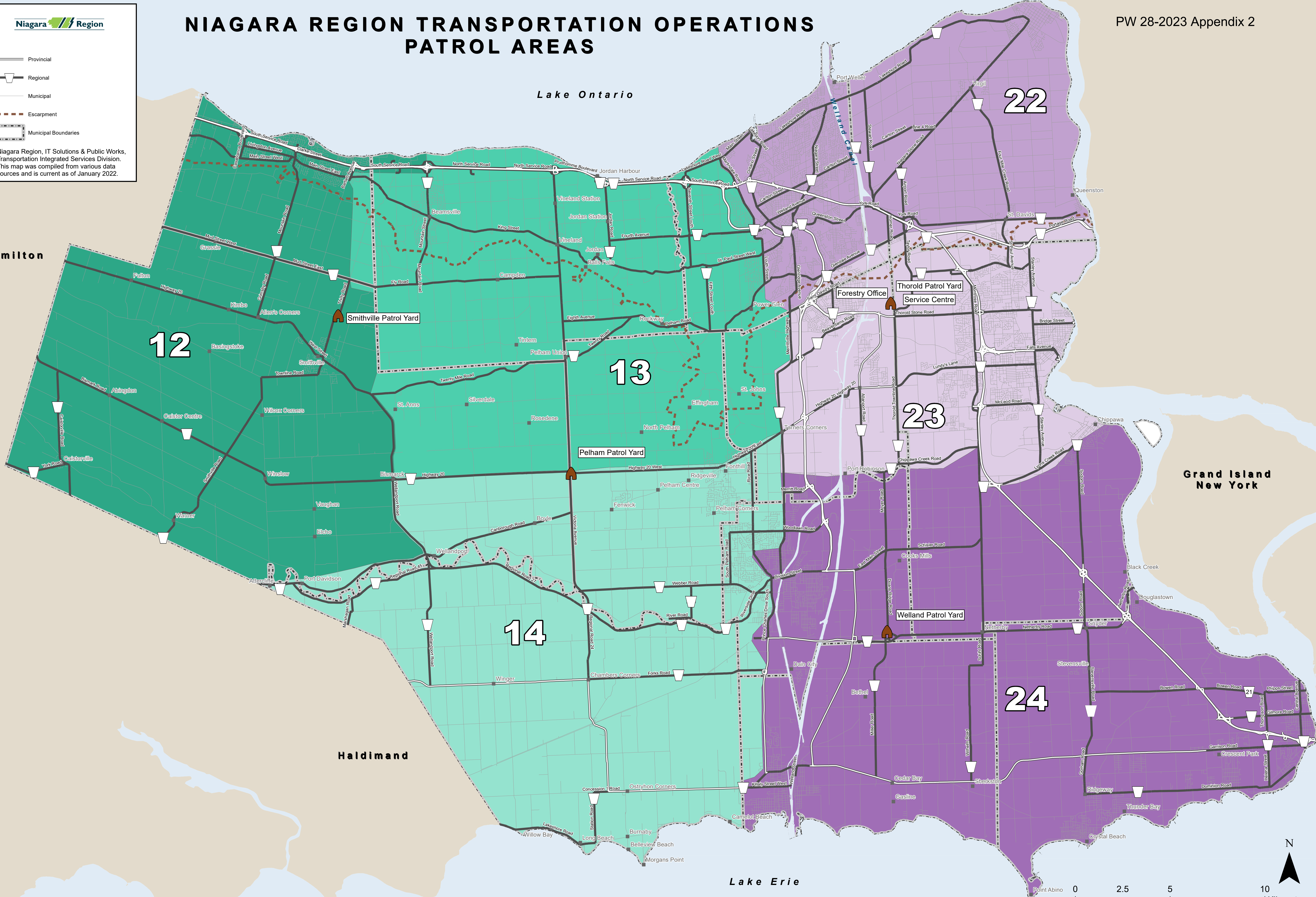


# NIAGARA REGION TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PATROL AREAS

- Provincial
- Regional
- Municipal
- Escarpment
- Municipal Boundaries

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Transportation Integrated Services Division.  
This map was compiled from various data  
sources and is current as of January 2022.

Hamilton



Grand Island  
New York

Haldimand

Lake Erie

N

0 2.5 5 10  
Kilometers





Map Legend

- Assessment Parcels
- Municipal Boundaries

